

DOWNHAM RURAL DISTRICT - ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1973

In a Circular dated 20th February, 1974, the Department of Health and Social Security refer to the involvement of Local Government Staff in Reorganisation and the fact that vital statistics for inclusion in Annual Reports cannot be available until after Reorganisation

Nevertheless, such reports as are found practicable are requested, and as your Medical Officer of Health will be away on a Course at the last Council Meeting, some brief facts on environmental health matters in 1973 are given below:-

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Public Health, Water and General Purposes Committee continued to serve as in 1972, and the District was free from Notifiable Disease apart from an outbreak of measles among young children (total of 120) which reached its peak in June and July. Only one new case of Tuberculosis was recorded, and there were no deaths from the disease.

The main problems during the year were:-

- (1) The continuing slow progress with the provision of main sewerage facilities and
- (2) The serious environmental problem at Stoke Ferry arising from noise and dust from the Animal Feed Factory.

Construction work commenced on the second phase of the Number 5 area sewerage scheme at Magdalen and St. Germans, and preparatory work continued with the Number 6 Regional Scheme for Stoke Ferry. A Regional Scheme for Marham and District was approved in outline by the Council in September.

Favor Parker Ltd., managed to reduce the noise nuisance at Stoke Ferry considerably by April, 1973 with sound absorbent and exhaust noise attenuation measures for the grinding plant, but these did not prove sufficient as the plant worked continuously, apart from certain weekends, and the background noise level in the village was low at night. An all-night survey in the Autumn demonstrated this, and the firm agreed that extra measures would be taken.

The emission of excessive dust, which arose mainly from the intake house was to be controlled by enlargement of the housing so as to completely enclose delivery vehicles, and work commenced at the end of the year.

The total number of visits made by the Department for all purposes increased to 5208 (4122 in 1972).

Food and Food Premises inspections, including Meat Inspection, were carried out with statistics remaining very similar to 1972. All 51 samples of milk taken by the County Council's staff from the area proved satisfactory.

Housing

- (1) Number of Council dwellings completed during year - 32.
- (2) Number under construction - 30.
- (3) Private dwellings completed - 44.
- (4) Number under construction - 46.
- (5) Number of Council dwellings at 31.12.73 :

Pre-war	-	420
Post war	-	1276
Other Council dwellings	-	<u>37</u>
Total:		<u>1733</u>
- (6) No. of Discretionary Grant Aided houses improved during year - 76
- (7) No. of Standard Grant Aided houses improved during year - 38.
- (8) No. of unfit dwellings demolished during year - 36.
- (9) No. of Unfit houses closed during year - 14.

The number of cesspools etc., emptied during the year again increased - 2864 (2791 in 1972) and pail emptying was continued in a few parishes.

Several refuse tips were covered over and closed and the survey of tips was continued.

The heating of the Swimming Pool was accomplished and about twice the number of people used it in a very successful season.

The Council's work was carried out under the very difficult conditions occasioned by lengthy discussion on Reorganisation.

Thanks again to colleagues and Members of the Council for excellent co-operation.

G.S. Sennitt,
Senior Public Health Inspector.

